

ment should be understood not as the return of our country as a major player in the international game, but rather as the fact that we have fallen into line, under American leadership, like all the other Europeans. This does not correspond to our history, our aspirations, or our interests.

It is therefore necessary to work on a complete repositioning of our foreign policy. Exiting NATO; re-establishing our independence and distancing ourselves

from the United States; rethinking and then relaunching the construction of Europe; reconsidering our relations with Islamic states; revitalizing our African policy; and considering new partnerships with Russia and China: these are just a few of the avenues—not all of them—that deserve to be taken into consideration in order to renew our approach to international issues and to offer the world a different face than that of a partisan French diplomacy, submissive to neo-conservative ideals.

Daisuke Kotegawa

The Obama Sanctions Sabotaged Japan-Russia Development

Daisuke Kotegawa is a former Japanese Ministry of Finance official, and former Director for Japan at the IMF. This is the edited transcript of remarks he delivered to the first panel, “The March of Folly: Can Mankind Still Extinguish the Now-Lit Fuse of Thermonuclear War?” of the May 8, 2021 Schiller Institute conference, “The Moral Collapse of the Trans-Atlantic World Cries Out for a New Paradigm.”



Schiller Institute

Daisuke Kotegawa

Today, I'd like to talk about the problem of economic sanctions on Russia. As you know, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe started negotiations with President Vladimir Putin in 2012, which dealt with longstanding issues of disputed islands between the two countries. For the first time in these negotiations, issues involving economic cooperation between Japan and Russia were introduced. The negotiation bore fruit, identifying eight areas of cooperation as follows:

Number 1: Growth in health and life expectancy. That is to say, intergovernmental cooperation such as disease prevention, investment and technical alliances between Japanese and Russian companies.

The second area was to create cities that are comfortable, clean, easy to live in, and easy to operate; [cooperation in areas] such as urban environment improvement in Russia, and waste disposal in Eastern Siberia.

The third area was drastic expansion of interaction and cooperation between Japanese and Russian small- and medium-sized enterprises, such as support for Jap-

anese small- and medium-sized enterprises to enter Russia.

The fourth area was energy, including Japan-Russia resource exploration and development off the coast of Sakhalin Island. And also increasing natural gas and oil production off the Sakhalin coast.

The fifth area was industrial diversification and productivity improvement in Russia, including loans to Russian companies by the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation, and long-term investment agreements by Japanese ma-

chine-tool manufacturers.

The sixth area was industrial promotion and export based in the Far East, including greenhouse vegetable cultivation businesses through Japan-Russia joint ventures, and construction of rehabilitation hospitals.

The seventh area was advanced technology cooperation, such as support for postal system efficiency, mobile phone and information and communication technology cooperation.

The last area was a very drastic expansion of people-to-people exchanges, including inter-university cooperation between Japan and Russia, and relaxation of visa issuance conditions by the Japanese and Russian governments.

However, a stone wall blocked the implementation of these projects. In February 2014, a coup d'état toppled the Ukraine government, which was planned and orchestrated by the U.S. government [with the prominent role of] Victoria Nuland. In order to avoid the use

of nuclear warhead-equipped submarines and warships in Sebastopol by residents, who are mostly ex-Russian Navy soldiers, President Putin declared the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, after the residents in Crimea voted for independence from Ukraine, and annexation to Russia.

Then, President Barack Obama visited Tokyo on April 23-25. On April 23, he had a dinner meeting at the most famous Sushi restaurant—"Jiro" in Tokyo—with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. After the dinner, Mr. Abe was asked by Japanese journalists if he enjoyed sushi. Unlike other occasions, Mr. Abe said, in a very bad temper, that he could not enjoy the dinner because he was completely occupied by business talks, mainly with Susan Rice. What unraveled later was as follows:

Number one: Both sides were represented by three people in addition to President Obama and Mr. Abe. They were the ambassadors of each country—Caroline Kennedy for the United States, and Mr. Sasae for Japan; and National Security Advisors, for the U.S., Susan Rice, and for Japan Mr. Yachi.

And then, secondly, President Obama did not eat sushi nor speak. It was Susan Rice that kept pressuring Prime Minister Abe to introduce economic sanctions on Russia, despite the fact that Japan had already contemplated its own sanctions on anonymous Russian individuals and companies who seemed to have been di-

rectly involved in the annexation of Crimea.

As a result, Japan announced additional economic sanctions on Russia, which included a certain number of Russian financial companies.

By including the sort of financial sanctions described above, three Japanese mega-banks which had extensive operations in New York and London, in order to be involved in U.S. dollar trading, came under a huge pressure to be very careful of any transactions involving Russian companies. They were afraid that U.S. authorities would unilaterally condemn any specific operation related to Russian companies as violations of sanctions and penalize them. Under such circumstances, it would be very difficult for them to challenge that legally. So, they have become very cautious in even opening up bank accounts which would be used by Japanese companies in their business with Russian companies not related to any business in Crimea.

Accordingly, regardless of many promising projects identified in the eight areas, the actual development of projects has been very slow. It is true that companies involved can avoid problems if they agree not to use the U.S. dollar as the currency for settlement. However, we have not reached such a stage, with companies in Japan and Russia still maintaining their preference for U.S. dollars. How long will such an attitude be sustained? That I don't know.

Thank you very much.

Caleb Maupin

Sanctions Against Syria, Conflict with China: Who Benefits?

Caleb Maupin is a U.S.-based journalist and political analyst and is the founder of the Center for Political Innovation. This is the edited transcript of remarks he delivered to the first panel, "The March of Folly: Can Mankind Still Extinguish the Now-Lit Fuse of Thermo-nuclear War?" of the May 8, 2021 Schiller Institute conference, "The Moral Collapse of the Trans-Atlantic World Cries Out for a New Paradigm." Subheads have been added.



Caleb Maupin

Schiller Institute

Greetings, friends. I want to thank you for the opportunity of addressing this very important web conference, about the topic of Syria, and the need to end the criminal sanctions imposed on the country by the United States, and the need for the United States to change its policies in how it relates to countries around the world.

Syria is a country that is led by the Ba'athist Arab Socialist Party, and the Ba'ath Party of Syria—its name, "Ba'ath," literally means re-